(b) whether there is any clauses or section in those agreements which deals with the patenting rights on the results of research;

(c) the advantages Government seeks to get out of these combined research; and

(d) the details of agreement entered between Acharya NG Ranga University for Agriculture and its counterpart in US?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) ICAR has entered into an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with college of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA; College of Food and Environmental Sciences, the Ohio State University, USA and Iowa State University, Iowa, USA.

(b) The work plans/research projects whenever formulated under these agreements include patenting rights (IPR) clauses.

(c) The advantages will be development of cooperation in the fields of research and training and improvement of production techniques.

(d) Acharya NG Ranga University for Agriculture has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with 10 Universities and one Institution in the US without financial commitment on either side. The collaboration through MoU is to facilitate exchange of faculty and students, short-term training, curriculum design and education etc. and development of joint proposals and applied research in frontier areas of agriculture.

Agrarian crisis in Kerala

407.SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Central Planning Commission team had visited Kerala to study the spiraling agrarian crisis in the State driving hundreds of farmers to suicide;

(b) if so, the details and their findings and recommendations made; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Central Government to solve the problems being faced by the farmers in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Pursuant to the memorandum received from Waynad Karshaka Samara Samiti, Waynad, Kerala, the Prime Minister's Office had requested Planning Commission to depute a team to visit Waynad district. Accordingly, a Planning Commission team accompanied by the State Government officials of Kerala visited Waynad district from 7th to 11th June, 2006 to study the agrarian crisis as mentioned in the memorandum. The team has submitted its report to the Planning Commission and the same is being examined.

Crisis in agriculture

408.SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hon'ble Prime Minister's visit to Vidarbha explores farmers suicides as a result of agrarian crisis;

(b) if so, the safeguards that the Ministry proposes to implement; and

(c) whether the WTO conditionalities may be reviewed in the interest of the farmers to resolve the crisis in the agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The Hon'ble Prime Minister visited the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra on 30th June and 1st July, 2006 to see at first hand the distress of farmers in the region. A special package for mitigating the stress of farmers for the six districts of Vidarbha region, namely, Wardha, Yevatmal, Amravati, Akola, Buldana, and Washim, was announced by the Prime Minister during the visit. The package aims at establishing a sustainable and viable farming and livelihood support system through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, crop centric approach to agriculture, assured irrigation facilities, watershed management, better extension and farming support services, improved marketing facilities and subsidiary income opportunities through horticullture, livestock, dairying, fisheries, etc.